

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L IAEA VIENNA 10556

PASS IO/SCT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, JA, PARM

SUBJECT: JAPANESE VIEWS ON REGIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE CENTERS

1. DURING HIS ATTENDANCE IN VIENNA AT IAEA SAGSI MEETING, IMAI RAISED WITH MISSION SUBJECT OF REGIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE CENTERS.

2. IMAI SAID VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR JAPAN IS WHETHER USE OF US REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY, "IF THERE REALLY IS ANY", IS AN OPTION FOR FUTURE JAPANESE PLANT, EITHER NATIONAL OR MULTINATIONAL. HE SAID HE HAS IMPRESSION THAT SUCH USE OF US TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN RULED OUT BY WASHINGTON, POSSIBLY DUE TO JAPANESE NON-RATIFICATION OF NPT. MISOFFS REPLIED THAT ANY DECISION WOULD BE MADE ON BASIS OF SPECIFIC PROPOSAL, AND POSSIBLE REGIONAL NATURE OF PROPOSED FACILITY WOULD BE ONE FACTOR TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. MISOFFS EXPRESSED VIEW THAT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, NO DEFINITIVE DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN THAT US REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY WOULD BE UNAVAILABLE TO JAPAN. WHEN ASKED FOR BASIS OF HIS
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UNDERSTANDING OF WASHINGTON'S NEGATIVE ATTITUDE,

IMAI SAID "SOME PEOPLE" WERE OPPOSED, BUT WOULD NOT ELABORATE.

3. IMAI BELIEVES QUESTION OF SITING OF FUTURE REPROCESSING PLANTS IS VERY DELICATE. HE SAID JAPAN WILL AT SOME POINT FLOAT POSSIBILITY OF A CERTAIN SITE "WHICH OF COURSE WON'T BE THE ONE WE'RE INTERESTED IN." HIS POINT WAS THAT PREMATURE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF GENUINE SITE MAY STIR UP POLITICAL CONCERN AND THEREFORE PRECLUDE USE OF SITE. IMAI, THEREFORE, IS CONCERNED THAT IAEA REGIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE CENTERS STUDY MIGHT CREATE TROUBLE BY FOCUSING ON SPECIFIC SITES. MISOFFS TOLD IMAI THAT DISCUSSION OF SPECIFIC SITES IS NOT ENVISIONED FOR AGENCY STUDY.

4. IMAI ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER COMPLICATIONS OF REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. HE SAID THINGS ARE DIFFICULT ENOUGH WITH ALL-JAPANESE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND THAT JAPAN WOULD RATHER AVOID ADDED DIFFICULTIES OF DIRECTORS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. HE AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT IF JAPAN ULTIMATELY HAS TO BUILD REPROCESSING PLANTS AWAY FROM ITS OWN TERRITORY, DUE TO SITING PROBLEMS, THAT SOME POLICY VOICE FOR HOST COUNTRY MAY BE PART OF DEAL.

5. RE ALL OF ABOVE POINTS, MISOFFS UNDERLINED TO IMAI SERIOUS US INTENT TO CONSULT FULLY WITH JAPAN ON REGIONAL CONCEPT AND TO TAKE SUCH CONCERNS INTO ACCOUNT.

6. AFTER DEPARTURE FROM VIENNA DECEMBER 12, IMAI PLANNED TO VISIT FRG, FRANCE AND UK FOR DISCUSSIONS, ACCORDING TO HIM, OF POSSIBLE COMMERCIAL INTEREST BY COMPANIES EXPERIENCED IN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF REPROCESSING PLANTS IN WORKING WITH JAPAN. HE PLANNED VISIT WASHINGTON EARLY JANUARY AND EXPECTED SEE KRATZER INITIALLY, AND OTHERS CONCERNED WITH JAPANESE PLANS FOR REPROCESSING. LABOWITZ

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